

Minutes of Extension Educator Council Meeting
Jan 27, 2005

Present: Karen Blass, Alan Eaton, Charlie French, George Hamilton, Alice Mullen, Matt Tarr, Steven Turaj.

1) Election Results: To represent Family & Youth Development, Alice Mullen was re-elected. To represent Natural Resources, Steven Turaj was re-elected. To fill the At-Large position, Matt Tarr was elected. We thanked George Hamilton for conducting these elections. We voted to accept (for this term) Alice Mullen to serve as chair, Karen Blass to serve as vice-chair, and Alan Eaton to serve as secretary.

2) Recognition and value of people serving on committees (and other administrative roles) We briefly discussed this topic before inviting Nancy Franz and Jim Grady to join us. We decided to discuss reporting issues and performance management issues at upcoming EEC meetings. There were several points of discussion, including:

- What is an administrative committee, vs. an interdisciplinary assignment

If some people are assigned to an interdisciplinary team that isn't central to their responsibilities, plus must serve on an administrative team, plus must get grant support for 20% of their salary, that is unfair! Little time left to accomplish items on their plan of work.

If we must make work on EEC a priority, why shouldn't administration recognize the value of serving?

Other discussion points related to recent GAP analysis, how to prioritize, Extension's economic picture, Who designates a shift in how priorities are identified? Lack of clearly defined purpose to some interdisciplinary teams, Empowerment of staff vs. top-down approach

3) Jim Grady and Nancy Franz joined us. We discussed the awards process first:

Recognition work team has been working on the web site on recognition

Before Xmas break, Jim reminded staff (email) about professional courtesy nominations, and the award for going beyond expectations. Nominees are being reviewed now. For next year, there will be these two awards, plus others that have been suggested are under consideration.

Much information on awards is available at the website.

Steve Judd can set up email accounts and details to allow committee members to review nominees, have access to files, share comments, or keep comments confidential. (These could make review and discussion easy.) Awardees will be determined in about a month.

Informal recognition: the committee is still working on this, but had to address other aspects first.

How do we prioritize our time? With administrative duties, programmatic duties, and vacant positions, this is a problem. Do we follow empowerment methods, or top-down approach? Nancy's comments: The supervisor and employee (together) are where most of these decisions should take place. The 10% interdisciplinary team edict came out of the PAST (Program Area Structure Team) report about 1 year ago. Our financial picture has also forced our approaches.

Discussion continued. Interdisciplinary teams don't all have common purposes or goals, and as a result, people don't have as big an investment/commitment in the effort. Did we decide to set up these teams before we really identified the issues? Data is currently being collected for the leadership team to address the issue of prioritizing staff time

-Grants Administration

We have significantly increased the number of grants rec'd and the \$ received, but we have less help in the business center and Office of Sponsored Research. Jim said that we are trying to work with incentives rather than punitive measures, to encourage getting more grants. Bonuses, getting work-study help, getting equipment are some possible incentives. It was pointed out that some people have difficulty making sense of the monthly reports sent to principal investigators of grants. We asked about a session to instruct recipients on how to read & interpret them. Alan suggested that it would be most efficient if this could be added to the agenda of another meeting, rather than set up another separate meeting.

Nancy's comment: We will need to identify tasks that we do, that are not valued, or where we can't find impacts. We'll need to "spin them off" or otherwise stop doing them.

Steve T: Could interdisciplinary teams identify priorities and emerging issues (esp. those with revenue potential)? Then we could address them, and help our economic situation. Nancy: Program Leaders are the key people to help recognize such opportunities and let this approach work. In discussion, we observed that our PL's vary in their ability to do this.

Jim Grady: Looking into adjusting salary ranges for specialists based on national data and discussing this with USNH. PAT's have a 6 month probationary period, while Ext Educators have a 1 year probationary period. Jim is looking into making some changes (allow for probationary increase, for example). Also, we need to revise the Ext Educator policy manual.

Jim and Nancy departed, and we continued other business

- 4) We reviewed and approved the minutes of the November 10, 04 EEC meeting
- 5) We named three EEC representatives to serve this year on the Presidential Excellence Award Committee : Karen Blass, Charlie French, possibly Matt Tarr (Matt had to leave early)
- 6) We briefly discussed the family friendly policy and leave pool, and the options in order to make this work. Negotiations are ongoing on this.
- 7) Alice reported on the President's Staff Mtg and actions. They will be discussing RCM (Responsibility-Centered Management) and the university's emergency operation plan. They are also putting together a University- wide calendar on the website. Alice feels extension's presence (in the currently planned form) isn't as good as it should be. But directly adding all extension events would create problems (we have so many, and many are off campus). She will talk with John Pike about this.
- 8) We discussed Heckel Award Nominations

9) We looked into finalizing the by-laws corrections that we discussed in November, and Alice distributed recently by email. We found a few more (minor) errors, so this is still not complete.

10) Adjourned 4:10 PM

Alan Eaton, recording secretary